



Ready, Set,

GO



A journey to kindergarten calendar



Getting ready for any journey takes time and thoughtful planning. As the young children in our lives find their way along the path of life-long learning, the adults that care about them can offer support and important lessons that will help them to succeed. This calendar has been created to help you become aware of some of the ways in which you already help your child to grow and develop, and give you some tips and ideas to do even more to support your child during the year before they start Kindergarten. This calendar will also give you some new ideas of practical, everyday activities that you can engage in with your child so that you both can feel confident about the move into Kindergarten. You will find suggestions for books that you and your child can read and fun things you can do together along the way. We've also included some encouraging ideas for the grownups in the family, to help them feel supported as well. Much of the activities and information in this calendar has been gathered from *Foundations: Early Learning Standards for North Carolina Preschoolers*. Foundations was developed by the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NC public education) to identify the widely held expectations for 3 – 5 year old children. We hope you will enjoy using this calendar. May it help you to celebrate the beginning of the journey to school and beyond! *Get ready, Get set, Go!*



there are other options. Does your school system offer year-round schools? How about magnet schools or charter schools? If other schools are an option, consider visiting each school you are interested in to see if it will meet your child's needs. If you wish to apply for these other schools, be sure to find out when applications are due.

- Participate in Kindergarten Registration or Kindergarten Orientation activities sponsored by your child's preschool or kindergarten program.
- Ask for a school calendar for the upcoming school year. Be sure you know what the school hours are for your child's school, as well as when teacher workdays and holidays are scheduled. Make arrangements for before and after school care if needed.
- Learn about transportation. If your child will be riding the school bus, ask questions such as: What is the bus number? When and where will your child be picked up and dropped off?
 - Since many kindergarten classes start the school year on a different schedule from the rest of the school, be sure to ask the school about your child's schedule for the first few days of kindergarten.
- Ask your child's school about opportunities for families to get involved and participate as much as your schedule allows (e.g. PTA/PTO, volunteer, etc). Research tells us children whose families are involved in the school, experience a higher rate of school success.
- Gather the forms required for kindergarten registration, including
 - » Your child's birth certificate
 - » Proof of residence, such as a rental agreement, mortgage statement, a current electric or gas bill, etc.
 - » Legal custody papers, if custody has been granted to a parent or other caregiver as a result of a divorce or other legal action.
 - » Completed Kindergarten Health Assessment form and immunization record

Getting Started...

- In North Carolina, if a child is five years old on or before October 16th, he or she is eligible to start Kindergarten for that school year.
- If your child is in a preschool program, talk with the teacher about what activities are planned to help children transition from preschool to kindergarten.
- Call your local school system to find out what school your child will attend. Ask if

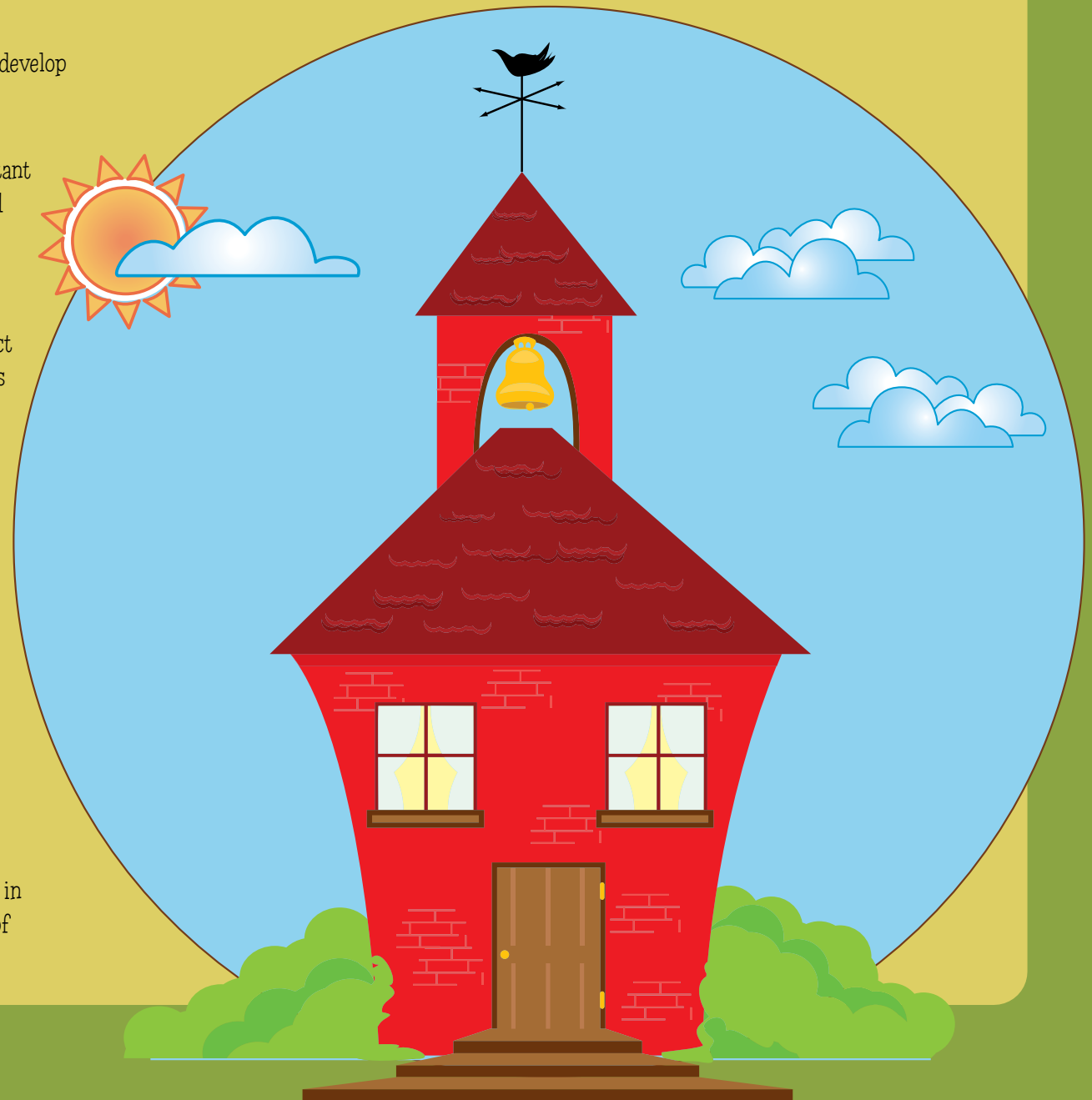
Kindergarten Health Assessment

- Call your child's doctor or health department to schedule an appointment for the health assessment that is required before going to kindergarten. The doctor will use the Kindergarten Health Assessment Report to record the results of the vision, hearing, and developmental assessment. This health assessment must be completed within one year of the start of the school year.
- Immunizations must be up-to-date before your child enters kindergarten. This can also be taken care of during the required physical.
- If your child has special health care needs (e.g. asthma, severe allergies, etc), or if medication must be available or given at school, work with your child's doctor to develop a written plan for the school so that those needs can be met.

- » **NUTRITION AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY** Breakfast is the most important meal of the day. Breakfast provides fuel necessary for a child's brain and makes learning easier. High protein, low sugar breakfast foods such as whole grain cereals, yogurt, fruit, and peanut butter are good choices for kindergarteners. Breakfast should be available at your child's school.
- » More and more children are becoming overweight. The extra pounds affect a child's health, activity, and self esteem. Review the school lunch menus with your children and help them make healthy low fat, low sugar choices. Or, you may wish to send healthy food choices from home for your children. Snacks are also an important source of needed nutrition for children. NC law does not allow high sugar non-nutrient candy and soda in kindergarten and elementary school vending machines.
- » Physical education will be part of your child's school day. Be sure your child is dressed warmly enough to go outside as winter approaches and make sure your child wears shoes that are appropriate for exercising. You can support a healthy and active lifestyle by spending additional time each day in physical activities you and your child can enjoy together.
- » **DENTAL CARE** The North Carolina 2005 Calibrated K5 Dental Assessment showed that 42 percent of children already had tooth decay by the time they entered elementary school. More than one in every five kindergarten children had untreated decay. Six out of every ten children in North Carolina are expected to be affected by dental disease by the age of

17 years old. Brushing, flossing, cutting down on sugary snacks and getting regular dental care are the best ways to prevent dental disease for children and adults.

- » **SLEEP** Many school-age children do not get enough sleep. Lack of sleep makes it harder for children to pay attention in class and to learn. Children 5-9 years of age need at least 10 to 11 hours of sleep each night. Establish a routine bedtime for your child with a relaxation time before lights are turned out.



"The best thing to spend on your children is your time." -Louise Hart

September

Ready, Set, Go - Getting off to a good start in your journey toward Kindergarten

Kindergarten represents a huge milestone in your life and in the life of your child. The year before kindergarten can be a great chance for you and your child to get ready for this big life event! Here are some tips to think about as you begin the journey:

- Begin early – Talk with your child about the change that will be coming and allow your child to ask questions and express fears.
- Keep it positive – It's normal for families to feel some anxiety when their child goes off to Kindergarten, but if you can, try to keep it positive when you talk about the change with your child, so that he or she doesn't feel anxious about it as well.
- Teach new skills – Use the year ahead to teach your child some of the skills and routines that will be useful in Kindergarten
- Make connections between the adult's in your child's life - If your child currently attends preschool or receives special services, talk with your child's teacher or therapist about creating a transition plan for your child. If your child has special needs, set up a meeting with the school principal to discuss how the school staff can best support your child's individual needs.
- Take a tour – most schools are happy to have a child come for a short visit to get familiar with the school building and see a Kindergarten classroom at the beginning of the school year. Call the school that your child will attend and set up a time for a visit!
- Find out when Kindergarten registration will be held in your county.

Fun for Families

- Let your child help with household chores such as folding laundry or washing dishes
- Understand what can be reasonably expected of children, especially yours
- Go to a park
- Have printed material everywhere around your home
- Don't be afraid to turn off the TV
- Bake cookies or cupcakes from scratch
- Look at a flower together – up close! Talk about all that you see...
- Put out plastic containers and lids with small items to move around – this will encourage your child to count, sort, and explore!

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Tips for Families

Practice these skills with your child until he or she is able to do them all by themselves!

- Blow nose, cover a sneeze with a tissue
- Use the toilet independently
- Wash own hands
- Snap, button, zipper or belt own pants
- Take off and put on coat
- Recognize own possessions such as jacket, lunch box, etc.
- Sit at a table to eat
- Eat independently
- Use silverware at mealtimes
- Eat at regular times during the day
- Put away toys when asked
- Express thoughts and feelings

Some children with special needs may need help or support materials to do these things. Talk to your child's teacher to figure out a way to make sure that these supports will be provided in Kindergarten.

Resources For Families

Book: Ready, Start, School! : Nurturing and Guiding Your Child Through Preschool & Kindergarten by Sandra F. Rief

Website: Child Development Institute
www.childdevelopmentinfo.com

FL Center for Parent Involvement, Transition to Kindergarten
<http://www.fmhi.usf.edu/institute/pubs/pdf/cfs/fcpi/transition.htm>

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Cuddle Up and Read with Your Child

Look Out Kindergarten, Here I Come!
by Nancy Carlson

Circus Shapes by Stuart J. Murphy

When a Line Bends a Shape Begins
by Rhonda Gowler Greene

Hector the Hermit Crab by Katie Boyce

Ten Black Dots by Donald Crews



"The giving of love is an education in itself" -Eleanor Roosevelt

Explore the Outdoors Together!

A Story of Children Exploring Nature

by Ann Pelo, teacher
at the Hilltop Children's Center

"That's a fuzzy plant!" Natalie exclaimed, discovering a vase of pussywillow branches in the studio.

"It's called pussywillow," I replied.

Molly, Natalie, Raven, Olivia and Melina gathered around the pussywillow branches lying on the table next to the vase. They stroked the soft buds, and caressed the sturdy branches.

"It tickles me!" Natalie laughed as she held the pussywillow up to her cheek.

"They are very soft and furry," Raven murmured.

"The branch feels kind of smooth, too," Olivia commented.

Molly, looking closely at a branch, exclaimed, 'I see little tiny buds!'

Melina looked at the buds Molly pointed out. "They're fuzzy, too."

After their close-up study of the pussy willow branches, I offered the children watercolor paper and black drawing pens, inviting them to sketch the pussywillow. Eventually, the children added color to their sketches—rich browns and deep greens, silvery white and grey and black.

Fun for Families

- Take time to notice the world together - rocks, rainbows, clouds, spider webs, etc.
- Listen to books on tape – these can be checked out from the library too!
- Read favorite books over and over again.
- Look at maps or globes together and talk about different places in the world.
- Take nature walks and collect natural items – seedpods, pinecones, rocks, feathers, etc.



- Visit an aquarium and talk with your child about all the things you see there. Many aquariums have opportunities to touch marine life.
- Visit the park – run, count the ducks, play catch, have a picnic and read a book.
- Look at a frog - up close! What do you see? Can you hop like a frog?

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Resources For Families

Book: Naturewatch: Exploring Nature with Your Children,
by Adrienne Katz

Website: NC Department of Public Instruction
<http://www.ncpublicschools.org>

NC Department of Public Instruction Primary Section
<http://community.learnnc.org/dpi/ec/>

Tips for Families

Start a list of questions that you or your child may have about Kindergarten and post these on the refrigerator. When you or your child thinks of another question, add it to the list. Take some time each week to find out the answers and talk about the questions together. Here are some sample questions that you might find on your list:

Will I know anybody at Kindergarten?

Will my friends be there?

May I take my blanket to Kindergarten? Will I get to nap during the day?

What will I be doing all day in Kindergarten?

Who will give me my medicine?

What kind of toys will they have?

Where will I go to the bathroom?

What kind of food will they have?

Is it okay to cry in Kindergarten?

Will I get to go outside and play?

How will I get to school and then back home again?

Who will be my teacher? What if I can't remember the teacher's name?

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Cuddle Up and Read with Your Child

Tiptoe into Kindergarten
by Jacqueline Rogers

Snug in Mama's Arms
by Angela Shelf Medearis

The Listening Walk by Paul Showers

Swimmy by Leo Lionni

Anna Shares by Barbara Baker



"The work will wait while you show the child the rainbow, but the rainbow won't wait while you do the work." - Patricia Clafford

Sharing time in the Kitchen

Fun for Families

- Bake muffins. Add 6 blueberries to each one. Can you get one blueberry in each bite?
- Practice what it will be like to eat in the school cafeteria – allow your child to serve herself the food at mealtime .
- Show affection! HUG! SMILE! LOVE!
- Learn together about your community - visit a historic site.
- When you are reading a story together, ask your child "What happens next?" (make predictions)
- Prepare a snack with your child's help – talk about the recipe you used.
- Learn about mixing colors by mixing together food colors.
- Put out mixing cups and measuring spoons and let your child measure rice, noodles, beans or water.



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Resources For Families

Book: Smooth Moves to Kindergarten by Patricia W. Wesley

Website: North Carolina Early Intervention and Early Childhood Lending Library

<http://www.ncei-eclibrary.org/index.cfm>

NC Smart Start: <http://www.ncsmartstart.org>

Smart Start is a public/private initiative that provides early education funding to all of the state's 100 counties

Tips for Families

Create a photo album of the new school for your child. You could do this when you go for a visit, and ask your child to take pictures of things that he/she would like to remember. This will give your child some concrete pictures to look as they think about the change to come. You could include pictures of:



- The front entrance
- The playground
- The cafeteria
- The school bus (inside and out) & bus driver!
- The Kindergarten classroom
- The class pet
- The teachers and other staff such as the principal, the school secretary, and the cafeteria workers

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Cuddle Up and Read with Your Child

When You Go to Kindergarten
by James Howe

Too Many Tamales by Gary Soto

Hop Jump by Ellen Stoll Walsh

Stone Soup by Ann McGovern

The Beastly Feast
by Bruce Goldstone



"There are no seven wonders of the world in the eyes of a child. There are seven million." -Walt Streightiff

Let's Pretend!

Ten hands swirl the white finger paint around the table.

"I'm drawing the wind," announces Ling Su, dashing slanted bold strokes.

"Looks like scribbles to me," says Pete.

Ling Su hesitates for a moment and then smushes the paint into more wild patterns.

"Maybe you haven't seen the wind, then," she says.

From For the Love of Children by Jean Steiner and Mary Steiner Whelan

Fun for Families

- Give the gift of self and time – drop everything else and play with your child
- Go skipping with your child
- Find a place outside and draw with sidewalk chalk
- Participate in local celebrations – street fairs, craft fairs, festivals
- Listen to and build on your child's ideas
- Let your child have a tea party for their stuffed animals or dolls
- Gather nuts, bolts, washers and other small mechanical items and tools for play and sorting
- Listen to music and dance with your child
- Prepare greeting cards and take them to the post office together



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Resources For Families

Book: Playful Parenting by Lawrence J. Cohen

Website: American Library Association www.ala.org
Has a link to great sites for parents, caregivers, teachers
and others; color-coded by age for easy use.

Exceptional Children's Assistance Center (ECAC)
www.ecacparentcenter.org A North Carolina parent center
for parents of children with special needs.



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This is the time of year for family and friend gatherings, so it's a good time to talk with your child about all of the different kinds of families and what it means to be a member of a family. It's also a time when families are inclined to hurry and get stressed. Here are some tips that can help if you start to feel the stress of the holidays closing in on you:

Reassess and Prioritize - Holiday stress sets in when you try to do it all. Take some time to think about what is important to you, and then let the rest go! If your child has special needs, it is okay to tell family and friends what he/she can or cannot handle.

Delegate! - Let each family member be responsible for cleaning and/or decorating a room. Children will feel more included in the holidays as if they are involved in the preparations.

Don't Give in to the "Gimmies" - "I want, I want!" This familiar phrase can wear us down over the holidays, but giving in to your child's every request can cause financial distress. Talk with your child about the true spirit of the holidays and about how together you can enjoy the fun family traditions that don't cost any extra money.

Think of the holidays as an opportunity to learn to practice patience and look for creative ways to use your imagination and enjoy being together.

"We worry about what a child will become tomorrow, yet we forget that he is someone today." -Stacia Tauscher

Getting from Here to There: School Bus Safety

It is helpful for families to introduce themselves to the bus driver and discuss appropriate behavior on the bus. Choosing a buddy to sit with each day may cut down on negative behavior. Talk with your child about your own experiences riding the school bus. What are your memories of riding the bus? Was it fun? What did you do on the bus? Give your child some suggestions of things to do on the bus such as: look at books, watch the scenery go by and count the number of red cars that you see, talk quietly or sing songs with friends, etc. When children have a good sense of what the bus ride will be like, they are more likely to be ready to hop on board!

Take your child on a trip on a city bus for a fun family adventure. This will give your child an idea about what it is like to ride a bus and also to have good feelings about the bus due to the happy memories of your trip together.

Fun for Families

- Eat dinner together at home and talk about your day
- Talk about and do things that interest your child
- Children need time...pause....be patient
- Visit a science center or science exhibit at a museum
- Encourage your child to explore and make choices.
- Ask your child to draw a picture and send it to a friend as a way of saying "thank you"
- Encourage children to re-tell experiences and stories
- Create tents with blankets, chairs, tables and other creative items
- Go to the grocery store together – Read labels, find healthy foods



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Resources For Families

Book: Health, Safety and Nutrition for the Young Child by
Lynn Marotz, Marie Z. Cross and Jeanettia M. Rush

Website: Parent Soup www.parentsoup.com

Parents can share ideas and opinions with each other.

NC Health Choice Program: www.dhhs.state.nc.us/dma/cpcont.htm Website for the statewide health insurance program for children

Cuddle Up and Read with Your Child

My Kindergarten by Rosemary Wells

People by Peter Spier

I Love You Like Crazy Cakes
by Rose Lewis

My Many Colored Days by Dr. Seuss

Where the Wild Things Are by
Maurice Sendak



Tips for Families

Gather together all of the documents that you will need to register your child for Kindergarten. **Contact your child's school to find out exactly what you will need.** Some documents that you may need are:

- Your child's birth certificate
- Your child's social security card
- Your child's immunization record
- Your child's completed Health Assessment
- Your child's records from other programs – such as evaluation reports, medical records, etc.
- Completed school forms – such as the application for free and reduced meals, emergency contact information, etc.
- Your child's Individualized Education Program (IEP) if he/she has one

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"Children smile on the average 400 times/day; Adults: 15 times/day. Ever wonder why?"

I just love to see you smile!

Young children love to hear and to tell riddles. It's fun to share a laugh together! Here are some riddles you can share with your child ~ and maybe you will overhear your child tell these riddles to friends in Kindergarten!

What did the rug say to the floor?

Don't worry, I've got you covered!

Where does a fish keep its money?

In a riverbank!

What building has the most stories?

The library!

What has teeth but does not bite?

A comb!

What goes up when the rain comes down?

An umbrella!

What is the best kind of fish to eat with peanut butter?

Jellyfish!

What is the best month for a parade?

March!

Tips for Families

Does the school require a health checkup for my child before Kindergarten? Yes!

Kindergarten Health Assessment: A Checklist

- ☐ Have your child's health assessment completed within one year of the start of the kindergarten year.
- ☐ Call your child's doctor to schedule an appointment for the Kindergarten Health Assessment (PPS-2K) to record the results of the vision, hearing, and developmental assessment.
- ☐ Check with the doctor to be sure your child's immunizations are up-to-date.
- ☐ Find out if your child will need a written plan for any special health care needs such as asthma or severe allergies.
- ☐ Visit your child's dentist for a before school checkup.

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Resources For Families

Book: The Giant Encyclopedia of Preschool Activities for Four-Year-Olds ed. by Kathy Charner and Maureen Murphy

Website: The National Parenting Center www.tnpc.com

Family Support Network <http://fsnnc.med.unc.edu>

Family Support Network of NC provides support for families with children who have special needs



Cuddle Up and Read with Your Child

Look Out Kindergarten, Here I Come!
by Nancy Carlson

What I Look Like When I am Angry
by Heidi Johansen

A String of Beads by Margarette S. Reid

Enrico Starts School
by Charlotte Middleton

Chrysanthemum by Kevin Henkes



Fun for Families

- Snuggle close together and read every day
- Sing familiar and favorite songs together
- Set up "stations" or "centers" around the house for art, reading, playing, doing puzzles
- Allow unstructured, unplanned time to be with your child Play together!
- Ask questions – and encourage your child to ask questions
- Invent a Scavenger Hunt and then go on it with your child
- Visit the library – get a library card for your child
- Create a dress up box with clothes, shoes, old jewelry and creative play things

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Caring for the Caregiver

"All I really need to know about how to live and what to do and how to be I learned in Kindergarten. Wisdom was not at the top of the graduate-school mountain, but there in the sand pile. These are the things I learned:

- Share everything.
- Play fair.
- Don't hit people.
- Put things back where you found them.
- Clean up your own mess.
- Don't take things that aren't yours.
- Say you're sorry when you hurt somebody.
- Wash your hands before you eat.
- Flush.
- Warm cookies and cold milk are good for you.
- Live a balanced life – learn some and think some and draw and paint and sing and dance and play and work every day some.
- Take a nap every afternoon.
- When you go out into the world, watch out for traffic, hold hands, and stick together.
- Wonder. Remember the little seed in the Styrofoam cup: The roots go down and the plant goes up and nobody really knows how or why, but we are all like that."

- From All I Really Need to Know I Learned in Kindergarten by Robert Fulghum

"Children reinvent your world for you." -Susan Sarandon

Fun for Families

- Look for signs of spring together – buds on trees, baby ducklings, snow melting
- Show enthusiasm and encouragement for the effort your child shows
- Always be aware of where your child is, even if they are in the house with you
- Be available - don't put your child off
- Visit the police station or firehouse
- Have fun with words, make up rhymes together
- Teach your child how to shake hands with people
- Provide opportunities for your child to talk with adults and other children

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Tips for Families

Talk, sing and play with your children using your home language – the language you know best. This will not interfere with your child’s ability to learn English.

Keep a journal or written record of your child’s activities, skills and interests. This may help you to provide quick information to those who will be working with your child in the new school.

Let your child know how much you appreciate his or her help.

Read about 4-year olds and what they can do.

Recognize “mistakes” as opportunities to learn. If a toy is left out in the rain, ask your child “What can we do so this won’t happen again?” or “How can we fix it?”

Can your child...

- Listen to an adult and follow simple directions?
- Share and play with other children?
- Play with other children without hitting or biting?
- Sit still for short periods (10 min)?
- Follow simple rules?
- Communicate basic needs and express feelings?

If you have concerns about your child’s abilities, talk with your child’s physician, preschool teacher, or your local Children’s Developmental Services Agency (CDSA). They will be able to connect you with the best services for your child’s own needs.

Resources For Families

Book: So This is Normal, Too? Teachers and Parents Working out Developmental Issues in Young Children, by Deborah Hewitt

Websites: Terrific Transitions www.terrifictransitions.org
Provides a wide variety of transition information.

Parenting Me www.parentingme.com A website from the child’s point of view with lots of parenting tips.



Cuddle Up and Read with Your Child

Kindergarten Rocks by Katie Davis

Pearl’s New Skates by Holly Keller

Apple Batter
by Deborah Turney Zagwyn

Why Am I Different by Norma Simon

Vera’s First Day of School
by Vera Rosenberry



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“Children are apt to live up to what you believe of them.” -Claudia Lady Bird Johnson

Fun Times Together

Butterfly Laughter

"In the middle of our porridge plates
There was a blue butterfly painted
And each morning we tried who should reach
the butterfly first.
Then the Grandmother said: "Do not eat the
poor butterfly."
That made us laugh.
Always she said it and always it started us
laughing.
It seemed such a sweet little joke.
I was certain that one fine morning
The butterfly would fly out of our plates,
Laughing the teeniest laugh in the world,
And perch on Grandmother's lap."

- a poem by Katherine Mansfield

Fun for Families

- Take a risk, try new things! Your child will see you doing this and then will be more likely to try new things too!
- Encourage self-reliance, but be ready to help if asked
- Involve your child with small fix-it jobs around the house
- Go to a local cultural event – dance, musical, play, art exhibit, or community celebration
- Sing! Sing! Sing!
- Read to children every day
- Collect magazines or old greetings cards and help your child cut out the pictures
- Sprout beans or other seeds – plant bulbs
- Go to a nearby park and throw a Frisbee or play catch

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Tips for Families

Get involved with your child’s school!

Research has shown that there is a link between school success and how involved a parent is in their child’s education. Volunteering in your child’s Kindergarten class will give you an opportunity to see what happens during the school day, support your child, and show your child and your child’s teacher that you think education is important. Here are some ideas for what you could offer to do as a parent volunteer:

- Telephone other parents about upcoming events at the school
- Donate items for the pretend play area
- Get involved with the ParentTeacher Association (PTA)
- Help in the school office
- Make props for learning centers
- Share your own interest or hobby with the class
- Help with lunch
- Bring in favorite foods to share
- Help with art or music activities
- Join a committee of the PTA that interests you
- Organize a family support group
- Help in the library
- Assist in planning special events



Cuddle Up and Read with Your Child

Tom Goes to Kindergarten
by Margaret Wild

Country Kid, City Kid
by Julie Cummins

Mouse’s First Spring
by Lauren Thompson

Inch by Inch by Leo Lionni

The Carrot Seed by Ruth Krauss



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Resources For Families

Book: Kindergarten: Ready or Not? A Parents Guide
by Sean A. Walmsley and Bonnie Brown Walmsley

Websites: Kids Health www.kidshealth.org
Health information for parents

The American School Directory www.asd.com
This website provides vital information on all K-12 schools in the United States

"A hundred years from now it will not matter what my bank account was, the sort of house I lived in, or the kind of car I drove...but the world may be different because I was important in the life of a child." -Forest E. Witcraft

Out and About, Exploring the World with your Child

The child awakens to
a universe. The mind
of the child to
a world of wonder.
Imagination to a world
of beauty. Emotions
to a world of intimacy.

It takes a universe
to make a child both
in outer form and inner
spirit. It takes
a universe to educate
a child. A universe
to fulfill a child.

- A poem by Thomas Berry

Fun for Families

- Include your child in daily errands such as trips to the grocery store, bank or post office
- Let your child make some decisions such as which pajamas to wear
- Encourage your child to be physically active – run, skip, hop, jump!
- Make up songs together
- Buy magnetic letters and numbers for your child to play with on the refrigerator or a pizza pan
- Encourage your child to talk about his or her thoughts and feelings
- Take walks around the neighborhood and find a new place to explore
- Make a hopscotch grid and play hopscotch
- Go to a playground together



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Resources For Families

Book: How to Talk So Kids Will Listen and Listen So Kids Will Talk by Adele Faber

Websites: Family Education www.familyeducation.com/home
Articles, activities & tips for families

The National Sleep Foundation
www.sleepforkids.org/html/sheet.html

Tips for Families

Find out what is being offered at the school for new families and make it a point to attend. Many schools will set up a "Meet the Teacher" day, open house, Kindergarten Orientation, support groups, or other functions that can be very helpful for families that have children entering Kindergarten.

Start thinking about plans for transportation – How will your child get to school in the morning and get home in the afternoon? What time does school start and when are the children sent home for the day? Who will care for your child during the time either before or after school when you are still at work? Contact the school to find out more about before and after school care.

Practice good sleep habits – Young children need between 10-12 hours of sleep each night to be ready for the day ahead. Your child needs sleep so that he/she will have all of the energy it takes to make it through a busy day of learning in Kindergarten! If your child does not already have a regular sleep schedule, now is the time to create one. Create a routine of having dinner, taking a warm bath, brushing teeth, reading a book together and then drifting off to sleep. A routine will help your child know what is coming next, and will help prepare your child to go to sleep at the same time each night. Also, practice good sleep habits yourself so that your child can see that you take sleep seriously too! You'll both feel better for it!

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Cuddle Up and Read with Your Child

Kindergarten Jitters by Colleen Pitterle

The Very Hungry Caterpillar
by Eric Carle

Growing Like Me by Anne Rockwell

Hello, Shoes! by Joan Blos

Little Rabbit Goes to School
by Harry Horse



"Fatherhood is pretending the present you love most is soap-on-a-rope." -Bill Cosby



Making Friends

Friendships are an important part of school success. When children form friendships, they tend to love going to school and will participate more in activities while at school. Children who feel good about themselves and have positive relationships with friends are more likely to enjoy school and work hard there. In addition, friendships are important in helping children develop emotionally

and socially. They provide a training ground for trying out different ways of relating to others. Through interacting with friends, children learn the give and take of social behavior in general. They learn how to set up rules, how to weigh alternatives and make decisions when faced with dilemmas. They learn how to win, how to lose, what's appropriate, and what's not. They learn that they're both similar to and different from others. Through friendships, children improve their sense of self-esteem.

Here are some things that you can do that will support your child and the friendships he or she makes:

- Let your child know that you feel friendships are important and worth the effort.
- Respect your child's social style; some children do best with a host of friends, and some do best with a few close friends. Some make friends quickly, and some warm up to friends slowly.
- Contact your neighborhood library to see if any playgroups are offered in your area.
- Find practical ways you can help your child make friends like setting up play dates or simply making suggestions, such as "Would you like to invite somebody to go to the pool with us on Saturday?"
- Be flexible about your family schedule so that your child can find time to be with friends.
- Make arrangements for your family to spend time with another family that has a child of similar age.
- Organized group activities such as sports, dance classes, art or nature classes can provide a chance for your child to interact with other children that share a common interest.
- Talk with your child about their feelings and experiences with friends. Problem solve together ways to handle difficulties with other children.

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Resources For Families

Book: Parenting from the Inside Out
by Daniel Siegel and Mary Hartzell

Website: I Am Your Child www.iamyourchild.org
Rob Reiner and his wife Michele started the organization
to increase public spending on early childhood programs.

National Center for Early Development and Learning
www.ncedl.org

Fun for Families

- Know and talk about your feelings and emotions and help your child talk about theirs
- Share happy stories and memories from your own childhood
- Plant a garden or grow seeds in pots
- Take your child to a baseball game
- Learn poems and rhymes together
- Make homemade macaroni and cheese together
- Fill up a plastic bin with clean sand and add some plastic zoo animals for your child to play with
- Go to the website for your local Chamber of Commerce, Visitor's Center and/or Parks and Recreation Department and find all the fun things to do in your community that are free.

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Cuddle Up and Read with Your Child

Miss Bindergarten Gets Ready for Kindergarten by Joseph Slate

Do You Want to Be my Friend?
by Eric Carle

Ella Sarah Gets Dressed
by Margaret Chodos-Irvine

Month by Month a Year Goes Round
by Carol Diggory Shields



"If you can give your son or daughter only one gift, let it be enthusiasm." -Bruce Barton

Taking Care of Myself

Personal Items: Your child will be expected to bring some personal items to keep at school, such as:

- a change of clothes
- a coat & mittens in the wintertime
- a pillow & blanket for naptime
- school supplies

Check with your child's school to find out exactly what you will need. Use a permanent ink marker to put your child's name on all of his/her items.

Teach your child about how important it is to keep track of his/her things while at school.



Fun for Families

- Ask your child what he/she would like to do
- Imagine and pretend and encourage pretend play
- Walk, ride a bike or swim with your child
- Teach your child new words by describing what you see, hear, smell and touch
- Keep books, paper, crayons, markers and pencils easily available and within reach
- Help your child learn how to play UNO, Go Fish, or other fun card games
- Use old magazines for making collages – cut out and arrange pictures on cardboard
- At the grocery store, find a fruit or vegetable to try that you've never tasted before
- Visit the Farmers Market and compare what you see with what you saw at the grocery store

July

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Resources For Families

Book: Going to School by Sharon and Craig Ramey

Website: The Parenting Institute

www.theparentinginstitute.org A North Carolina program with parent education resources, activities for you and your child, an online library.

National PTA www.pta.org Information about PTA organizations across the country



Cuddle Up and Read with Your Child

Welcome to Kindergarten by Anne Rockwell

Growing Vegetable Soup
by Lois Ehlert

How About a Hug? by Nancy L. Carlson

Good Job, Little Bear by Martin Waddell

To the Beach! by Linda Ashman



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Tips for Families

Backpacks: An overfilled backpack can strain muscles and cause pain in the shoulders and back and can affect your child's posture. A loaded backpack should weigh no more than five pounds. Shoulder straps should be wide and padded. Children should always use both straps.

Organized group activities such as sports, dance classes, art or nature classes can provide a chance for your child to interact with other children that share a common interest.

Talk with your child about their feelings and experiences with friends. Problem solve together ways to handle difficulties with other children.

"Today you are You, that is truer than true. There is no one alive who is You-er than You." Dr. Seuss

Celebrate Your Child!

Never Let Go of Your Dreams

Children of morning, children of night,
call to the wind for your guiding light.
Children of winter call unto to spring,
children of summer take flight on a wing.
Laughing, crying, jumping, and play,
each life was formed from natures fresh clay.
Molded, and shaped just like you are,
not manufactured like a train, or a car.
Evening approaches take shelter for the night,
for from Heaven shall come the brightest of light.
Reach out your hands and touch a star,
no matter if it seems to be to far.
Grasp your future, and hold on tight,
never let go of that shining light.

- a poem by Velmar Pewee Hale Johnson



Cuddle Up and Read with Your Child

The Night Before Kindergarten
by Natasha Wing

Annabelle Swift, Kindergartener
by Amy Schwartz

Excuse Me! by Lisa Kopelke

Harold and the Purple Crayon
by Crockett Johnson

No Mirrors in My Nana's House
by Ysaye M. Barnwell



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Tips for Families

Now is the time for school shopping!

- Ask your child's teacher for the list of supplies that your child will need to bring during the first few weeks of school. Each school and teacher will have a different supply list, so it's important to find out for sure what you will need.
- Involve your child when you pick out school supplies and allow him/her to make some choices. Would you like the purple pencils or the red pencils? There is so much to choose from!
- Check with your child's school to find out if they have any coupons or information about school supply discounts.
- Shop during the North Carolina "Sales Tax Holiday"! During the first weekend in August (Friday through Sunday) you can shop for school supplies and pay NO SALES TAX! This is a special program in our state – you can save a bunch!



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Fun for Families

- Make sure that your child knows his/her first and last name, street address, telephone number and landmarks close to home
- Establish new, and continue old family traditions for special occasions
- Ask your child to paint or draw a picture of your family
- Let your child "get lost in books"
- Take pictures of your favorite places – talk about them together "What happened?" "Where did you go?" Create a scrapbook of the photos together
- Make an art box with paper, markers, watercolor paints, crayons, glue, tape, scissors, etc.
- Set a good example by having your child see you reading

Additional Resources for Parents

More Books for Adults:

Developmental Profiles Pre-Birth through Eight, 3rd Edition, by K. Eileen Allen & Lynn R. Marotz

Ages and Stages: Developmental Descriptions & Activities Birth Through Eight Years, by Karen Miller

Making Make-Believe: Fun Props, Costumes, and Creative Play Ideas by MaryAnn F. Kohl

The Book of New Family Traditions: How to Create Great Rituals for Holidays and Everyday by Meg Cox

The Complete Book of Activities, Games, Stories, Props, Recipes, and Dances for Young Children by Pam Schiller

More Books for Children:

It's Okay To Be Different by Todd Parr

Billy and the Big New School by Laurence Anholt

Friends at School by Rochelle Bunnett

Do You Want to be My Friend? by Eric Carle

School Bus by Donald Crews

Time for School, Nathan! by Lulu Delacre

Leo the Late Bloomer by Robert Kraus

Red Day, Green Day by Edith Kunhardt

Curious George Goes to School by H.A. Rey

Little Tiger Goes to School by Julie Sykes

This Little Light of Mine adapted by Rachel Lisberg

Bein' With You This Way by W. Nikola-Lisa

What Makes Me Happy? by Catherine and Laurence Anholt

10 Little Rubber Ducks by Eric Carle

Little Cloud by Eric Carle

The Snowy Day by Ezra Jack Keats

In My Family/En Mi Familia by Carmen Lomas Garza

Families by Ann Morris

Doodler Doodling by Rita Golden Gelman

The Listening Walk by Paul Showers

The Toolbox by Anne Rockwell

1001 Questions and Answers by Dorling Kindersley

How can I tell that my child's school is ready to serve Kindergarteners?

Does your child's school:

- **Recognize Families as Partners**

Families are an integral part of a child's life. You know your child best and have information that can promote continuity between your child's early experiences and kindergarten.

- **Share Leadership**

Schools and kindergarten programs that invite input in decision-making are more likely to meet the needs of communities and families.

- **Provide Comprehensive and Responsive Services**

School staff should collaborate with the family to focus on the full range of needs that a child may have. Services should be in place to meet social service needs, educational needs and health needs.

- **Support Culture and Home Language**

Services should be consistent with the home culture of the child and communication should be provided in the home language.

- **Provide Good Communication**

The school should work closely with families to communicate expectations about Kindergarten at the beginning of the year and in an ongoing way to make sure that parents are informed about what happens during the school day.

- **Provide Appropriate Care and Education**

Kindergarten programs should be developmentally, individually and culturally appropriate for five-year-olds.

- **Conduct an Evaluation of Partnership Success**

Home, school and community partners should document their efforts and use evaluation information to improve policies, programs and practices.

- Adapted from the Southeastern Regional Vision for Education

101 Ways To Connect with your Child

*** Wow * Way To Go * Super * You're Special * Outstanding * Excellent * Great * Good * Neat * Well Done * Remarkable * I Knew You Could Do It * I'm Proud Of You * Fantastic * Super Star * Nice Work * Looking Good * You're On Top Of It * Beautiful * Now You're Flying * You're Catching On * Now You've Got It * You're Incredible * Bravo * You're Fantastic * Hurray For You * You're On Target * You're On Your Way * How Nice * How Smart * Good Job * That's Incredible * Hot Dog * Dynamic * You're Beautiful * You're Unique * Nothing Can Stop You Now * Good For You * I like You * You're A Winner * Remarkable Job * Beautiful Work * Spectacular * You're Spectacular * You're A Darling * You're Precious * Great Discovery * You've Discovered The Secret * You Figured It Out * Fantastic Job * Hip, Hip, Hurray * Bingo * Magnificent * Marvelous * Terrific * You're Important * Phenomenal * You're Sensational * Super Work * Creative Job * Super Job * Fantastic Job * Exceptional Performance * You're A Real Trooper * You Are Responsible * You Are Exciting * You Learned It Right * What An Imagination * What A Good Listener * You Are Fun * You're Growing Up * You Tried Hard * You Care * Beautiful Sharing * Outstanding Performance * You're A Good Friend * I Trust You * You're Important * You Mean A Lot To Me * You Make Me Happy * You Belong * You've Got A Friend * You Make Me Laugh * You Brighten My Day * I Respect You * You Mean The World To Me * That's Correct * You're A Joy * You're A Treasure * You're Wonderful * You're Perfect * Awesome * A Plus Job * You're The Best * A Big Hug * A Big Kiss * I Love You!**



All About Me

Use this page to record important information about your child that you would like to share with his/her Kindergarten teacher.
Fill it out with your child by asking the questions and then writing down the answers for your child.

My name: _____ My nickname: _____

My parent's/guardian's name: _____

My brother(s)/sister(s) name(s): _____

My birthday is: _____

My comfort item is: _____

I sleep best when: _____

My best time of day is: _____

My favorite thing to do is: _____

I need help with: _____

It makes me happy when: _____

I get upset when: _____

My favorite color is: _____

My favorite book is: _____

My favorite place to visit is: _____

My pet is a _____ and his/her name is: _____

What I like to eat: _____

Before Kindergarten I was (check one):

☐ In full-day preschool/child care

☐ In part-day preschool

☐ Staying with a neighbor or someone in my family

☐ At home

Other things that I want you to know about me:

Place a photo or two of your child here

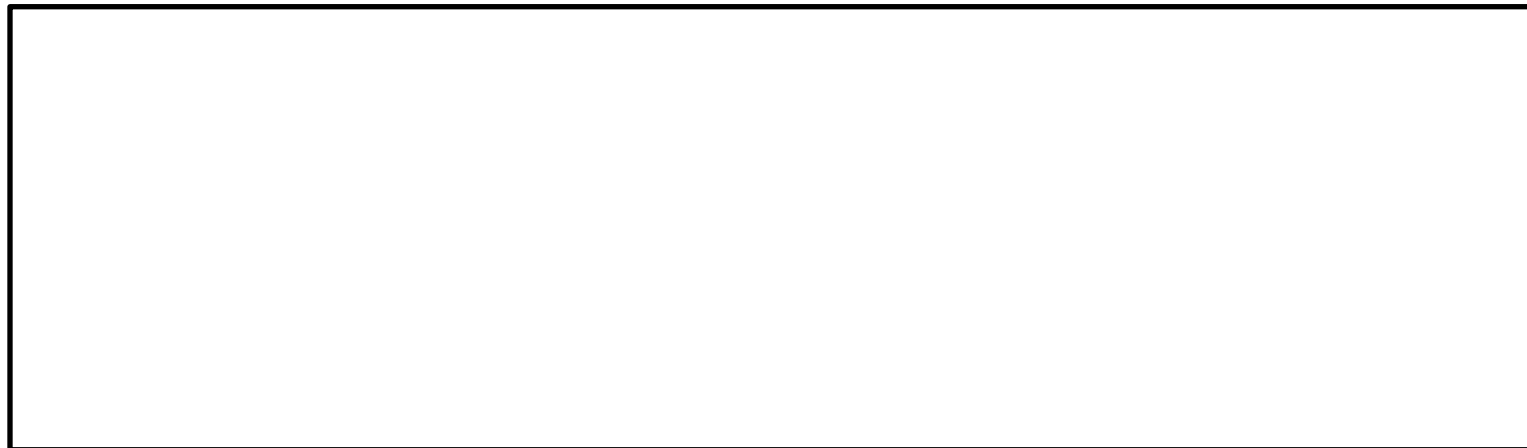
Ask your child to draw a picture of themselves here

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